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THE AMERICAN NUMISMATIC SOCIETY
(FOUNDED 1858 · INCORPORATED 1865)
BROADWAY AT 155TH STREET
NEW YORK · N.Y. 10032

MEMORANDUM

To: Leslie A. Elam

From: William E. Metcalf

Date: February 9, 1993

Re: ACNAC proposal

The way Herbert formulates the question does not really go to the policy question. That is good, because we are making up policy here. The principal barrier to the publication of imperial collections is a "cost:benefit" matter, in two ways: the number of new (or even rare or interesting) coins that the publication will bring to light makes the cost of publishing those coins prohibitively high; and, since die study (the principal beneficiary of publication in Sylloge format) is unlikely to be applied to most--indeed, nearly all--Roman series, there is little point in illustrating yet another new specimen of a well-known type.

Obviously these philosophical considerations are moderated by practicality and common sense. In the case of the Wheaton, there was a sentimental reason for publishing Mrs. Newell's coins, especially in advance of their dispersal; and as for the earlier volume of Washington U., whatever Crawford may have said, this remains a decent collection of Republican coins, one of the few in the U.S. That does not go for the imperials. But one could well imagine that we would publish, e.g., a specialized collection of imperial gold, or of fantastic sestertii, or medallions, or the definitive collection of Gordian III. (All these are analogous to Houghton's Seleucid.)

What I have seen of the Washington U. (I forget where it was) leads me to think that it is not very interesting and that the Society would stand to gain nothing but a big stock of books in return for enormous labor. And that is the ultimate practical consideration: the journal and the monographs are getting yet further behind, with no sign of improvement. How could we take on another project only to put it on infinite hold?

2/10/94 Spoke to

Alice Strauch Meyer Gerdine

Her first husband (1930) was John Meyer, son of Alfred C. F. Meyer – lawyer, scholar, banker who killed himself about 1932 at the age of about 56 (yrs old). He was head of a South Side Bank which failed in 1932. Anheuser Busch put him in the banking business.

John Max Wulfing was a cousin of A.C.F. Meyer

ACF Meyer collected Roman coins and after his death his coins were sold to Washington University. (Whether ~~Edw~~ Tavenner or someone else sold the money I don't remember.

John B. Strauch became of head of National Bearing metals. All were friends of Dick Hawes.

1912 Book of Athenaeans says ACF Meyer's recreation was numismatics.

Meyer family in grocery business as was Wulfing. Meyer's father was in same grocery firm as Wulfing's for a while.

ACF Meyer was in haw Dept of Washington Univ according to 1912 St Louis writeup.

Kevin Herbert 994-9507 res

Joseph Katner res 962-2065
Came in 1982, head of Steenbock Hall.

Publication of Roman Imperial
Roger Hornsby, seeking such a person to complete work.
Display of types – Greek
Roman
Woman

Curator for 26 years

Coop with Univ of Mo at Columbia
Merc Money Museum.
Committee for Oversight of Collection (inactive).

Charles Wulfing + his wife. for committee.
Gerald Bolles suppressed displays + opposed.
publication, still alive
left Wash Univ 1989. 8½ yrs Portland Art Museum fired
3rd vol complete under review late peroi 3rd century.
4th vol. 4th cent Nerva – Marcus Aurelius

Eugene Tanenmen died in 1964. Married Hildegarde Wulfing in 1929
1923–1929 parts of collection to Wash Univ
John Max Wulfing gave lectures, died in Jan 1929
Married Wulfing daughter in 1929 a day or so before Wulfing died.
Collection was transferred to Steinberg when Olin was built
From Rebsley where it was in shelves.
they dropped case when moving it from upper Steenbey to basement.

American Indian collection on loan to Science Museum.

Committee
2 students

Bill Gass
Cynthia Weese – Dean of Arch
Joe Diehl – Dean of Arts
Bob Thorpe Chm – of Art History
Herbert Williams. Assoc Provost
Susan Hanno Hannasch atty

Swantes Sencontaglia – Greek.

COPY

March 9, 1994

Prof. Kevin Herbert
Department of Classics
Washington University
St. Louis, MO 63130

Dear Prof. Herbert,

Leslie Elam has shown me your manuscript of the Wulfing imperial and provincial coins and asked me to comment on it for you. A collection of this sort is always a problem, and the best comparison I can think of is the Princeton imperial collection, of which vol. 1 was published some years ago by Pierre Bastien and Brooks Levy. You have probably seen the volume, which is splendidly printed and superbly illustrated. But this cannot conceal the fact that the collection is rather run-of-the-mill, including few coins outstanding for their condition, no real study series, and none of the great rarities. The book has not sold well at all, and plans for vol. 2 have been abandoned.

So it is, I fear, with the Washington University collection. Its value as a study tool far outweighs the return to be got from publishing it. The coins were obviously selected with some care, and you have done a very able job of arranging them; they are now ready to be used by anyone. I am giving a talk to a Barnard class in couple of weeks on the age of Nero, and will draw upon our collection (Columbia has its own, locked away); but you could do this in St. Louis drawing on yours. Or--more importantly--in the future someone with access to the coins and your catalogue could do it himself even with minimal numismatic background. So while I am sorry about the bleak outlook for publication, I do not think your work has been in vain.

I wonder if it would be possible to get good prints of the denarii

of Otho, nos. 323-326? I am collecting material for an eventual die study, and enclose an offprint of some preliminary work on the subject.

With all good wishes,

As ever,

William E. Metcalf
Chief Curator

Elise Meyer
Louisville Ky

[redacted]

~~Son of~~ John Max Wulfing was her grandfather
Hildegarde, her aunt

never heard of ACF Meyer

~~He married his cousin~~
~~Meyer~~

Fred, William, Charles Wulfing ~~got~~ name by their grandparent being adopted by John Max Wulfing they sprung from Wulfing's sister's children

John Max died of mastoid infection suddenly in 1928 (?) and left his collection to Washington University.

Wulfing had many friends interested in antiquarian matters & they could have put up money in 1932 to buy Meyer collection

Status Report on the W U Coin Collections, 1 April 1994
by Kevin Herbert, Curator

This report is being submitted to the Committee because I intend to relinquish the curatorship as of 30 June 1994. In 1968 Dr. George Pake, then the Provost, appointed me Curator of the Wulfing Collection and since then I have completed three volumes on the Collection, one on the Greek and one the Roman Republican coins under the imprint of the American Numismatic Society, New York, and a third on the Early Roman Empire, 31 BC-AD 96, now in camera-ready form for publication. A fourth work on the great Imperial age of the second century, AD 96-180, is in preparation. Further, in the recent past three exhibitions have been mounted in the Lower Gallery, each displaying forty items focused on a special theme and accompanied by a guide book. In 1989 Ancient Greek Coins: the Three Historical Ages appeared, in 1991 Roman Republican Coins, and in 1993 Goddesses, Queens, and Women of Achievement on Coins and Medallions.

The role of the Wulfing Cabinet as a ranking study collection in the nation requires that this research, publication, and exhibition schedule continue in the future for the benefit of students, the interested public, and scholars both here and abroad. In order to secure these goals I am happy to recommend to the Provost that Professor Sarantis Symeonoglou of the Department of Art History and Archaeology succeed me as Curator.

Two problems of a specifically numismatic nature must also be addressed here:

1) research on the Imperial Roman coins of the third and fourth centuries, a period requiring specialized historical and technical expertise, and

2) the deaccessioning and sale of a large number of duplicates, the proceeds from which would be used to purchase many other coins to enhance the Collection. Recommendations on these and other matters will be made by our distinguished guests, Professor Roger Hornsby and Mr. Eric Newman, members of the Governing Council of the American Numismatic Society, who have graciously agreed to present their considered views to the Committee.

Roman Imperial Coins arranged by period or type
but not yet scheduled for definitive description and publication

Cases means Coin boxes

Severan dynasty, AD 195-235	**8** cases	Julian-Theodosius, 361-395.	**4** cases
Max Thrax-Gallienus, 235-268.	**11** cases	Alexandrian issues, 2nd-4th c.	**5** cases
Cl Gothicus-Numerian, 268-284.	**9** cases	Low grade Imperials.	**8** large cases
Diocletian-Constantinians, 284-360.	**13** cases	Byzantine, including gold hoard.	**2** cases

Similar Miscellaneous

Unpublished Greek	**1/2** case	Medallions, 15th c. to modern	**3** shelves
Select European and American	**2** cases	Paduans, electrotypes, and fakes	**1** case
Unclassified European and America	**1** case		

Altvater Collection

Greek silver and Byzantine gold **1** case

Duplicates

780 Roman doubles were identified in the process of publication. The funds realized from their sale could purchase coins that would significantly expand and enhance the Collection, including Hellenistic, Indo-Greek, Jewish, Parthian, Sassanid, and barbarous Celtic and Germanic issues.

Kevin Herbert, Department of Classics, Box 1050
Washington University, One Memorial Drive
St. Louis, MO 63130-4899. USA

9 April 1994

Mr. Eric Newman
6450 Cecil Avenue
St. Louis, MO 63105

Dear Eric,

I am writing to respond to your views made at the meeting of the Committee on the Art Gallery last Friday. In my written statement presented to the Committee I proposed that the coins which I had segregated as duplicates be deaccessioned and sold in order that the proceeds therefrom be used to purchase coins which would further strengthen and enhance the Collection. I listed the areas which require additions, among which are the thinly represented Indo-Greek and Parthian rulers; the Maccabean dynasty and other Jewish entities, which are not represented at all; and early European issues which would complement an already large group. You opposed such action on the grounds that it might be resented by the heirs of the donor; that it might inhibit future deeds of gift from other parties; and especially that many of these segregated pieces might be of use for die studies in order to learn the sequence and thus the dating of specific issues.

I respond to each of these points as follows:

1) For the past thirty years I have been in contact with the Wulfing family here in St. Louis, Louisville, Maine, and Georgia. They have corresponded with me, have come individually and in large family groups to see the coins, put me on the mailing list of the Wulfing Family national news letter, sent one of the younger generation to be a student in my Greek history course, and have received from me copies of the main publications and notices of exhibitions with the catalogues. When I first proposed the sale of duplicates ten years ago there was no opposition because they knew this action was designed to improve the Collection. At that time Dr. Cornelius Vermeule, Curator of the Classical Collections in the MFA, Boston, was consulted and enthusiastically supported the concept; an agent of Spink and Son, London, came to survey the material and made a cash offer; but in the last analysis the process was stopped by the then Director, who opposed all things numismatic.

2) There is a good precedent for such a sale at WU. When the then curator H. W. Janson sold some indifferent paintings in the middle 1940's he acquired the funds to begin the foundation of the now outstanding collection of modern works. The fiduciary responsibility of directors and curators is double-edged. Care-taking is a primary duty but it is not enough when items are found to have no further use, now or in the calculable future, and when present needs are known but neglected. A good general example from Classical art would be the thousands of plaster casts that were on display in museums such as the MFA and the MMA before 1910 or so, because nothing else was then available to American collections. All of these have long since disappeared save the few

used for teaching purposes in art departments, because the MFA, the MMA, and the Getty now have world-famous pieces of every kind and period.

3) The type duplicates are all from the Roman Republic and Empire. In the vast majority of cases the exact date had long ago been determined for each issue from the coin-legend or symbols and in every instance I chose the better preserved coin for retention. This of course is not the case with the Greek city-states where variant dies of the same issue are useful in attempting to establish sequences and dates, and so all of the Greek coins (save a few later found mixed with the Romans) were published in the ANS edition of 1979. In light of the nature of the Wulfing Cabinet as a comprehensive study collection Roman lower-grade type duplicates have no function, even though in fact I did keep some variant die types of the same dated issues. The segregated items have had no purpose within the Collection for the past ten years, yet they do have a considerable market value and the funds realized could be used to enhance the Collection. Thus I personally and especially want to see the one blank area in the Collection filled - that of the Maccabean-Hasmonaean Jewish kingdom and of the period of the Jewish revolts against Rome. Finally, since I initiated this process many years ago with distinct goals in mind for the betterment and broadening of the Collection, I think it right that the areas discovered to be in need of supplements be the first to receive them. If this action is tabled again action might not occur for fifty years or more. It comes back to the matter of fiduciary responsibility in the positive rather than the passive, do-nothing sense.

Finally, Dr William E. Metcalf, Chief Curator of the ANS, in a letter to me dated 6 April 1994 approves the sale of the duplicates and advocates that the proceeds be used for purchases in new areas. He states that he also tends to agree with my judgment that the Wulfing Collection is the most comprehensive Classical cabinet in the nation, with only Princeton and Yale as competition. In light of the few qualified to make such a judgment I think it is safe to say that the Wulfing is WU's least known resource of world-class standing. But such an asset also brings the burdens of ongoing attention, renewal, research, and display.

I applaud your views expressed to the Committee concerning the matter of risk. Curators must always be prudent but must also be willing to exhibit regularly, publish and publicize fully, lend to other museums, assist other scholars, and make use of the objects in courses and seminars. Otherwise the objects should be placed in a bank vault or a deep cave and left there, unseen, unknown, and seemingly safe.

Thank you for participating in the session with the Committee and I hope that you will continue to give your advice about and help to the Collection in the future.

Cordially yours,

Kevin

Copies: Dr. Gerhild Scholz Williams, Associate Provost, WU
Mr. Joseph Ketner, Director, WU Gallery of Art

Washington
WASHINGTON·UNIVERSITY·IN·ST·LOUIS

Gallery of Art

April 20, 1994

Mr. Eric Newman
6450 Cecil Avenue
St. Louis, MO 63105

Dear Eric:

I apologize for not attending the Art Collections Committee meeting of April 1. Unfortunately, I fell ill with a virus and sinus infection. I do wish to take this opportunity to thank you for your time to review the Wulfing Collection and express your opinion to the committee. Because of your contributions, the meeting and the entire review process was successful. Thank you for contributing your expertise. The Committee will proceed with the registration, preservation, and storage needs of the collection and work with the new curator to increase scholarly access to and recognition of the collection.

Sincerely,

Joseph D. Ketner
Director

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May 11, 1994

Mr. Eric P. Newman
Eric P. Newman Numismatic Education Society
6450 Cecil Avenue
St. Louis, MO 63105

Dear Eric,

Enclosed are copies of what correspondence I could find with Herbert. There is no doubt something earlier, somewhere, but I have asked our secretary to search the files back to 1985 and she has found nothing else. I stand by my opinion expressed on March 9 of this year, and even more by the one expressed in my memo to Leslie, the substance of which (if not the exact contents) has been shared with Herbert already.

Just to get it off my desk I am forwarding the receipt for your payment to the INC. Thanks; see you July 15, 10:30 AM if not sooner.

Sincerely yours,

William E. Metcalf
Chief Curator

Enclosures